



# TOPEKA HOUSING AUTHORITY

## 2009 ANNUAL REPORT

*April 2, 2010*

This Annual Report is submitted to the Clerk of the City of Topeka by the Board of Commissioners of the Topeka Housing Authority (THA) pursuant to the requirements of K.S.A. 17-2363, the Municipal Housing Law of the State of Kansas.

THE TOPEKA HOUSING AUTHORITY

2010 SE CALIFORNIA

TOPEKA, KANSAS 66607

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### The Commissioners' Message

Serving as a volunteer member of the Topeka Housing Authority Board of Commissioners is a rewarding but difficult task. Our Board has adopted the goal of providing affordable housing assistance to every cost-burdened, low-income renter household in Topeka, and THA's capacity to address affordable housing needs is growing. This part of our work is rewarding.

The difficult part is that the magnitude of the task before us is growing as well. The global economic downturn has affected Topeka less than other cities, but both the number of area households needing affordable housing assistance and THA's waiting lists expanded steadily in 2009.

Still, we remain upbeat and dedicated to working with the City, our staff and the people we serve to find new and better ways to address affordable housing challenges in Topeka.

On behalf of my fellow commissioners (Frank Ybarra, Franklin Young, Gary Yager, and Nancy Artzer-May), thank you for the opportunity to serve in this capacity.

Sincerely,

Joseph E. Marshall, Chairman

### A Message from the THA Staff

We speak for every THA staff member when we say that we take great pleasure in working for the THA Board of Commissioners, and even more pleasure in being able to provide affordable housing to 1,800 Topeka households.

Five numbers drive what we do here at THA, and they are worth sharing. There are 5,800 renter households in Topeka with annual incomes under \$25,000. Approximately 3,400 of these households have affordable housing which is almost exactly the number of federal, deep subsidy affordable housing units available in Topeka. Effectively, the private rental market provides zero affordable units for these households.

For the other 2,400 low-income households housing is a numbers game that they are losing. And, in the end, it is not only these households that lose. The entire City loses as these households are disproportionately made up of elderly persons, persons with disabilities, and single parents. THA is committed to doing more to help these households.

As the following report indicates, 2009 was a busy and productive year for the Topeka Housing Authority.

We look forward to an even more productive year in 2010.

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John Johnston

Director

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Sophie George

Deputy Director



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## I. PERFORMANCE

The following comparisons for the 2006, 2007, 2008 and 2009 calendar years are taken from THA's internal benchmarking system.

### A. OVERALL PERFORMANCE

FAMILIES HOUSED	<u>2006</u>	<u>2007</u>	<u>2008</u>	<u>2009</u>
Section 8	1,010	1,072	1,073	1,067
Public Housing	586	621	626	627
Veterans Assisted Housing	N/A	N/A	19	27
Mainstream (Persons w/ Disabilities)	<u>13</u>	<u>20</u>	<u>20</u>	<u>19</u>
Total	1,609	1,713	1,738	1,740
SECTION 8 VOUCHER USE (%)	96.0	99.9	100.0	99.4
PUBLIC HOUSING VACANCIES (%)	7.2	4.9	5.4	5.0

### B. SECTION 8

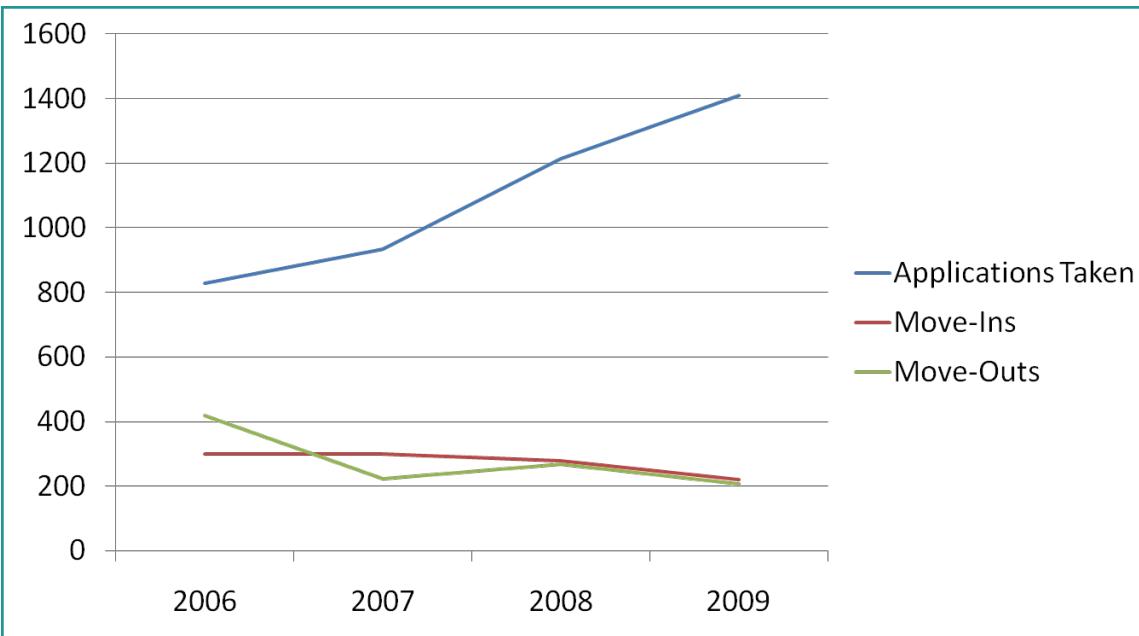
	<u>2006</u>	<u>2007</u>	<u>2008</u>	<u>2009</u>
APPLICATIONS TAKEN	1,900	1,038	550	0*
VOUCHERS ISSUED	721	87	547	0*

\* Section 8 waiting list was closed for calendar year 2009.

### C. PUBLIC HOUSING (depicted in chart 1)

	<u>2006</u>	<u>2007</u>	<u>2008</u>	<u>2009</u>
APPLICATIONS TAKEN	828	933	1,215	1,408
MOVE-INS	300	300	279	220
MOVE-OUTS	419	223	268	208

WORK ORDER RESPONSE TIME	<u>2006</u>	<u>2007</u>	<u>2008</u>	<u>2009</u>
Emergencies (Hours)	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0
Regular (Hours)	6.7	4.6	3.7	1.3
Preventive (Hours)	27.2	5.00	10.1	4.8
UNITS INSPECTED (%)	100	100	100	100

**Chart I: Public Housing**

#### D. PERFORMANCE ANALYSIS

The average number of families THA housed per month in 2009 (1,740) was slightly higher than in 2008 (1,738). THA programs are at maximum capacity and THA continues to fully utilize all available HUD funding.

The number of Public Housing program applications continues to increase, and the number of move-outs continues to decrease.

THA continues to improve in regular and preventative work order response times. The goal for emergency work order response time continues to be met.

## II. FINANCES AND THE ECONOMY

The United States economy continues to struggle. The national unemployment rate increased from 7.7% in January to 10% in December of 2009. The Topeka, Kansas unemployment rate in December 2009 was below the national average, but still this was not good news for the many "last hired, first fired" heads of households that THA serves.

HUD uses detailed formulas to determine how much it costs Housing Authorities to operate Public Housing and Section 8 Programs, then provides only a percentage of these formula amounts. THA was able to serve more households in 2009 than at any time in its history despite receiving only 92% of the funding that HUD calculates is required to operate THA's Public Housing units, and 91% of the Section 8 administration funding due THA.

Unfortunately, this has not been a one-year phenomenon. THA has not received full formula funding since 2002. Despite seven straight years of underfunding THA has been able to balance revenues and expenditures because THA's Public Housing and Section 8 Programs operate at a level of efficiency substantially higher than that of programs operated by Housing Authorities in other communities. Nationwide figures are not available for 2009, but in 2007 U.S. Housing Authorities received \$6.6 billion in Public Housing funding and spent \$10.1 billion. Clearly, this is not sustainable.

## III. DEMOGRAPHICS

### A. TARGET POPULATION

The composition of Shawnee County's population by race/ethnicity for all income levels is as follows (U.S. Census Bureau, 2006-2008 American Community Survey 3-year estimate data):

White (Non-Hispanic)	77.7%	Other Race (Non-Hisp)	0.1%
Black/African American (Non-Hisp)	8.8%	American Indian/Alaska native (Non-Hisp)	0.9%
Asian (Non-Hisp)	1.3%	Hispanic of any race	8.9%
Two or more races (Non-Hisp)	2.2%		

The composition of Shawnee County's households with incomes above/below \$25,000 by race/ethnicity is as follows (U.S. Census Bureau, 2006-2008 American Community Survey 3-year estimate data):

	<u>Below \$25k</u>	<u>Above \$25k</u>
White	72.6%	87.8%
Black/African American	15.1%	6.8%
Asian	2.3%	1.1%
Other Race	6.2%	2.5%
Two or more races	2.2%	1.2%
<i>Non-Hispanic</i>	86.3%	94.6%
<i>Hispanic</i>	10.9%	4.9%

## B. PROGRAM PARTICIPANTS

The composition of THA Public Housing residents and Section 8 Program participants in January of 2010 by race/ethnicity was as follows:

	<u>THA Public Housing</u>	<u>Section 8 Program</u>
White	62.9%	58.6%
Black	34.0%	38.0%
American Indian/Alaska native	1.7%	1.6%
Asian/Pacific Islander/Other	1.4%	1.7%
<i>Non-Hispanic</i>	<i>91.1%</i>	<i>92.8%</i>
<i>Hispanic</i>	<i>8.9%</i>	<i>7.2%</i>

## C. PARTICIPANT INCOME BY PROGRAM

Avg. Annual Income	<b>2007</b>	<b>2008</b>	<b>2009</b>
Public Housing	\$ 9,026	\$ 8,106	\$ 7,962
Section 8	\$11,823	\$12,066	\$11,767

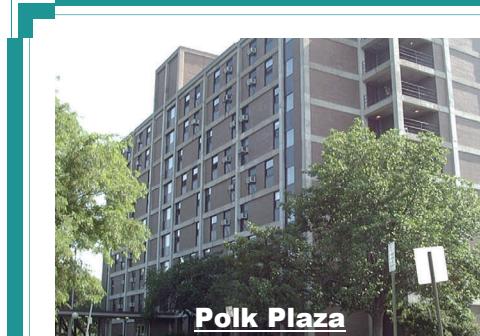
## D. ELDERLY PERSONS/PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES

The income distribution for the 15,301 households in Shawnee County with a head of household 65 or older is as follows (U.S. Census Bureau, 2006-2008 American Community Survey 3-year estimate data):

<b>Income</b>	<b>Percent</b>	<b>Number</b>
Under \$10,000	8%	1,266
\$10,000-\$14,999	9%	1,373
\$15,000-\$19,999	9%	1,433
\$20,000-\$24,999	8%	1,283
\$25,000 or more	65%	9,946

The composition of residents of THA's four Elderly/Disabled complexes by age and disability status is as follows:

	<u>2006</u>	<u>2007</u>	<u>2008</u>	<u>2009</u>
Elderly (62+)	26.9%	23.9%	27.2%	24.7%
Near elderly (55-62)	25.9%	26.8%	22.8%	30.6%
Under 55	47.2%	49.3%	50.0%	48.8%
Persons with disabilities	70.6%	68.3%	67.9%	64.8%
Elderly (62+) with disabilities	12.0%	6.2%	10.9%	11.4%
Non-elderly/non-disabled	7.9%	8.1%	11.6%	21.9%



The composition of Section 8 Program participants by age and disability status is as follows.

	<u>2006</u>	<u>2007</u>	<u>2008</u>	<u>2009</u>
Elderly (62+)	6.6%	7.2%	7.2%	8.3%
Near Elderly (55-62)	2.6%	5.6%	5.6%	7.0%
Under 55	90.8%	87.2%	87.2%	85.5%
Persons with disabilities	29.5%	22.0%	23.9%	26.8%
Elderly (62+) with disabilities	5.5%	1.4%	2.4%	3.8%
Non-elderly/non-disabled	65.3%	72.2%	76.1%	68.7%

## E. PARTICIPANT DATA ANALYSIS

These data suggest that THA is serving a mix of households that in terms of race and ethnicity is representative of the poverty population in Topeka. They also suggest that THA's mix of Public Housing residents and Section 8 Program participants contains somewhat more persons of color than might be expected based on Census data.

The most notable year to year change is that the average household income of Public Housing residents was 10% lower in 2008 than in 2007 (\$8,106 compared with \$9,026), and has dropped another 2% in 2009. The most ready explanation for this is the deteriorating economy.

It is THA's policy to focus affordable housing efforts on very low income persons, which we are continually doing.

## IV. NEW PROGRAMS AND GREEN INITIATIVES

THA was one of only 16 Housing Authorities in the country to receive a \$10 million ARRA "Green Communities" program grant in 2009. For the past several months THA has been working with staff of the City's Planning and Housing and Neighborhood Development Departments to design and build 69 units of affordable family housing on twelve acres of land that THA owns that is immediately east of THA's administrative office at 2010 SE California. The project will have three components: 69 energy efficient units; a community center that will serve as a City-wide education and resource center for energy savings and sustainable affordable housing development; and, low-maintenance landscaping combined with innovative storm water run-off features, flower and vegetable gardens, and shade trees.

THA received a one-time ARRA "Gap Filling" program grant in 2009 that will allow THA to add 16 energy efficient affordable housing units to the 25 units at THA's Tennessee Town elderly/persons with disabilities complex. This project is also a partnership between THA and the City. Four of the five vacant lots where the project will be built were donated to THA by the City, and the Department of Housing and Neighborhood Development has provided additional assistance.

Finally, THA received and spent a one-time \$1.2 million American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) capital improvements grant in 2009. THA used a portion of these funds for long-postponed capital improvement projects, the most expensive of which was a elevator at Tyler Towers. The remainder were used to make security improvements and to significantly increase the energy efficiency of THA's 662 Public Housing units.

These 2009 energy efficiency improvements include:

- Double-pane, energy star windows and high efficiency HVAC units at Pine Ridge (212 units);
- Energy saving light bulbs/fixtures in Polk Plaza, Tyler Towers and Jackson Towers apartments and common areas (286 units);
- Energy saving exterior lighting at Polk Plaza (109 units);
- Low-flow toilets at Polk Plaza, Tyler Towers, and Jackson Towers (286 units); and
- Low-flow showers and faucets at Western (22 units).

## **V. COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT AND PARTNERSHIPS**

THA values the many partnerships that create a stronger, safer, more attractive environment for Public Housing complexes and Section 8 program participants. In particular, we value our strong and effective working relationship with the Topeka Police Department. Sergeant Ron Ekis and the community officers under his direction are essential to THA's success.

In addition, the Boys and Girls Club of Topeka provides both in-school and summer programs for 6 to 15 year old residents of THA's Deer Creek and Pine Ridge complexes. And, THA staff work with staff at the Colmery-O'Neil VA Medical Center, the Topeka Rescue Mission, and VALEO on a daily basis and with a broad range of other Topeka agencies and organizations less frequently to insure that THA residents and program participants receive needed assistance.

## **VI. THE FUTURE**

The short-term outlook for THA at the end of 2009 is much the same as at the beginning of the year. Final funding decisions have not been made, but THA will receive roughly the same Public Housing and Section 8 funding in 2010 that HUD made available in 2009 and 2008.

Taking a longer term view, it is not possible to predict with precision what will happen over the next several years in terms of federal funding. However, the outlook beyond 2010 is not good given that the federal government is now running trillion dollar plus annual deficits, and presumably will continue to do so for some years.

Despite these challenges, THA made substantial progress in 2009 in regard to expanding its programs and refining and streamlining its operation, and we expect to make further progress in 2010. Beyond this, THA's Board and staff are pursuing the following goals:

#### **Portfolio Upgrading**

THA is working to replace or substantially upgrade THA's current portfolio. Instead of continuing to repair and patch complexes that are decades old THA is committed to providing housing for all Public Housing tenants that is newer, better, and more energy efficient.

#### **Additional Affordable Housing**

THA is working to acquire additional affordable housing units.

#### **Additional Revenue**

THA is exploring a wide range of revenue generating options.

## **VI. RECOMMENDATIONS**

K.S.A. 17-2363, the Municipal Housing Law of the State of Kansas, indicates that Public Housing Authorities "shall make recommendations with reference to such additional legislation or other action as it deems necessary in order to carry out the purposes of this Act."

The Topeka Housing Authority has no recommendations to make in this regard.

**Topeka Housing Authority Commissioners**

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Frank Ybarra, Vice-Chair

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